

## Revelation - Introduction, Part 2

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COURSE COMMENTARY



### Audience and Purpose

- **The Importance of Understanding Audience and Purpose**  
Artificially restricting the audience or purpose can result in lack of relevance to other believers and undermine application.
- **The Bias Against Prophetic Content**  
Some would have us believe that the prophetic aspects of *The Book of Revelation* are only minor. They want to minimize any prophetic emphasis in order to avoid the implications for the future. A devotional or political emphasis is elevated in its place.

### A Prophetic Book

- **Revelation contains Prophecy!**  
" It is important to understand what the book claims for itself. The words *prophecy*, *prophesy*, *prophesying*, *prophet* and *prophets* are forms used twenty-one times in the writing. " (Couch, *A Bible Handbook to Revelation*, 81)
- **What Characterizes Prophecy?**  
Biblical prophecy is characterized by:
  - 1) Short-term relevance to original hearers (also provides testability);
  - 2) Revealing the future which only God can foretell--a witness to His message ([Isa. 46:9-10](#));
  - 3) Motivation for godly living for the hearers of all ages (Jonah and Nineveh - [Jonah 3:5-10](#); Christian living - [2Pe. 3:10-14](#)).
- **Prophecy Often Transcends the Immediate Audience**  
By its very nature, prophetic scripture **must** be given to an original audience which may not be alive when the events transpire. Relevancy to the original readers is not the **sole measure** of the purpose of a passage (e.g., [Isaiah 53](#); [Zec. 9:9](#) cf. [Mat. 21:2-5](#)).

### John's Motive

- **What was John's Motive?**  
Some assert that John wrote *The Book of Revelation* after a long and careful consideration of the geopolitical climate and the impact the culture was having upon the Church.
- **Anti-supernatural Bias**  
" It was **natural** that the Church of the first century should produce such a writing, for Christian hope centered in the coming of the kingdom of God... " (Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John*, 156).
- **John's Motive was Obedience!**  
John had a powerful spiritual encounter with the glorified Christ ([Rev. 1:9](#)) and was **told** to " Write

the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. " (Rev. 1:19).

## Purpose

### 1. To Reveal Christ in His Deistic Glory

Christ is immediately and clearly revealed in His deity (Rev. 1:8; 1:11, 17-18 - Jesus is God!).

### 2. To Address the Needs of the Seven Churches

Chapters 2 and 3 address the specific needs of historic churches and by extension, churches of all times and places.

### 3. To Confirm the Prophecies of the Old Testament

Chapters 4 through 22 confirm that God's program as set forth in the Old Testament will indeed come to pass. It was not abandoned or subsumed by the Church Age.

### 4. To Reveal the Future

Achieving several results:

- 1) motivating believers to godly living and to watch for Christ;
- 2) motivating unbelievers to consider their ultimate destiny and that of the earth;
- 3) revealing the restoration of God's original created order.

## Theme

- **The Sovereignty of God**

God's direct intervention and control of the events of history is a powerful testimony of His sovereignty over creation. His purposes are **immutable**.

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- **The Glorification and Worship of God**

The book is chock-full of scenes of the worship of God in heaven (Rev. 4:8,11; 5:8-13; 7:9-12; 11:15; 15:2-4; 16:18; 19:1-8).

- **The Arrival of God's Kingdom on Earth**

This expectation from the Old Testament is finally fulfilled as Christ reigns from Jerusalem upon the throne of David.

- **A Worldwide Revival**

This time of unparalleled persecution and upheaval will bring perhaps the greatest revival of history as multitudes reject the worship of the Beast and turn to God.

For additional information on this topic, see the [commentary](#).